



The Magazine of The Scottish Motorcycle Club

WELCOME...

to the last edition of the 2012/13 season. Let's hope that next season will be as successful. We have just had our AGM and a 'new' committee elected.

Your Committee are:- basically the same as last year:-

Chairman – John Hill.

Membership Secretary – Steve MacKinnon.

Treasurer – Alex Muir.

Events – John Moss.

Editor – Janet Moss.

Meetings Secretary – Sarah Eddie.

At the recent AGM a new Post was added to the Committee, that of Merchandising, which is filled by Ken Eddie. If you would like to buy any of the Club merchandise then have a look at the website under Club Shop and email Ken at shop@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk with any questions or orders.

Also discussed at the AGM were the annual subscriptions and it was voted to keep the annual membership fee at £15 but there would no longer be a discount for early payment. Steve MacKinnon will be sending out renewals very shortly. There is also advice on the Club's website of how to pay your membership directly into the Club bank account. Go to Club Information on the Home page and click on Club Articles and there is a section "How to transfer money to SMC Bank Account".

Full Minutes of the meeting should be available on the website soon.

Don't forget to 'like' us on Facebook.

Cheers, Janet Moss

[Bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk](mailto:bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk)

Landmarks Challenge 2013

This year's Challenge is up and running. Steve Middleton has once again done a thorough job of organising it, so check out the front page of the website where you can find out how to participate in this event. Eight members achieved gold in last year's Challenge, let's see if we can beat that this year!!

Awards Night

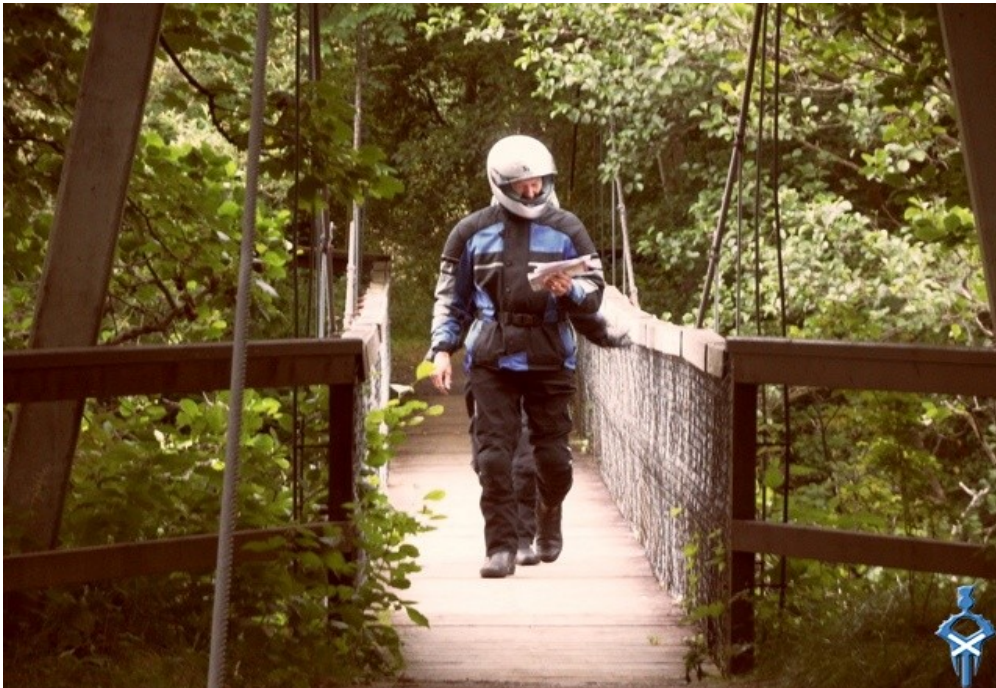
Twelve members met up for the Annual Awards Night at the Mercat Bar in Edinburgh on Saturday 2nd March, hosted this year by our Chairman, John Hill. After an enjoyable dinner and chat, John announced the winners of the various categories. They were:-

1. Most club runs attended by a non-committee member : **Frank Dolan** (20)
2. Most club runs organised : **Ken Eddie** (9)
3. Most TEC's on club runs : **Sarah Eddie** (9)
4. Most pillion rides on club runs : **Lorraine Dolan** (9)
5. Members favourite Photo on club website :

Joint Winners :- **Graeme Latimer and Alasdair Wood**

3rd :- **Janet Moss**

Graeme and Alasdair's winning photos were:-





6. Bridge Challenge certificates :

Gold (8) :- **Steve Middleton, John Hill, Janet Moss, John Moss, Tommy Taylor, Ken Eddie, Sarah Eddie, Jonathan Douglas**

Silver (3) :- **George Kay, Michael Wight, Alex Muir**

Bronze (2) :- **Helena Morton, Alasdair Wood**

7. Bridge Challenge photo :

1st **Alex Muir**

2nd **Steve Middleton**

3rd **Janet Moss**

Alex's winning photo, which was judged independently by two members of the Art Department at Linlithgow Academy was:-



The judges commented: “The quality of some of the images was very strong, and it’s nice to see how people approached the bridges in different ways and with different viewpoints”, and added “...please pass on our congratulations to the winners.”

They have offered to do the judging again for the Best Landmark Photo, so let’s see what you have to enter this year.

8. The Merit Shield was awarded to **Alasdair Wood** for all his excellent hard work with the new website.

The winners received :-

Engraved glasses for awards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 winners, 7 winner, 8.

Coasters showing the winning Bridge Challenge photo for :- 3rd in 5; 6 all certificate winners; all in 7

Rabbit in the Headlight

This time our “rabbit” is with Gavin Paton, a dedicated Diversion rider. See his article later extolling the virtues of this bike.



How long have you been a member of the SMC?

I joined the club in the September of 2009. My first run as a guest with the club was “up and doon the Forth” and I joined the next week, just in time for one of the last runs of the season when I followed Steve Middleton as leader down to Moffat and Peebles.

When did you pass your test and what was your first 'proper' bike?

I passed my test in or around April 1981 on a Honda H100 just before the introduction of the two part test. (I penned and submitted an article to Bikebytes about the test I sat a few years ago) A Yamaha XS250 followed the Honda, but I can recall more memories of my third bike a Suzuki GT 380 Ram air three cylinder two stroke. After the other two this felt like the real thing. The throttle did however work more like an on/off switch.

What would be your dream bike?

I am too practical a person to dream of exotica. I consider a motorbike to be a tool or a toy something useful that enhances your life in some way. I have always felt that what you do with a bike is more important than what type of bike you have. If it does all that you want it to do its perfect and I would never criticise anyone for their choice of bike. That said, I covet Alan Hooper's BMW F800ST if Alan ever comes out of a coffee stop and his bike is gone and has been replaced with the keys of a big divvy I'm probably guilty. (Although if he agrees with the other article I submitted for this issue he may not be too bothered.)

So, BMW F 800ST or perhaps an R 1200R or how about a Track T800-CDi Diesel

What is your favourite biking road?

Last year's local favourite that I managed about 4 times was a quick blast out to the A702 Crawford to Thornhill road and a return along the B797 Mennock Pass Leadhills road. The route involves good number of quick open bends and nice surroundings, if you have time to look.

Where were you born and when (optional)?

Born in a maternity hospital in Baillieston on 15th August 1958 and taken home to Shotts at 5 days old where me Mum and Dad still stay.

What do you do for a living?

Technical Teacher/Expensive child minder

I am presently the P.T. of the Technical Department at Uddingston Grammar School.

Where, for the most part I teach some lovely pupils but also mind those few individuals that no amount of coercion or effort on my part will make them produce anything resembling meaningful work.

What's your favourite film?

Don't know if I have a favourite, but the film that most impressed me in recent years was the 3D version of Avatar. The special effects were stunning and could make you believe in the possibility of alien worlds. I remember at one point in the film leaning forward to try to move some leaves to the side to try to see more of the detail in the background.

What's your favourite food/drink?

I like it spicy, so a nice well made curry or Mexican dish is always nice. I once had a fantastic 24oz T-bone steak in a bar in Texas years ago that the thought of is making me

salivate even now that must be an all time favourite. For drinking I am quite partial to some of the ales that Wetherspoons sometimes put on as guest beers. They can't quite beat a measure of Drambuie or Glayva diluted with a measure of whisky over 4 lumps of ice mmmmmm.

What's your pet hate?

Cars that stick to the middle lane doing 55mph on the motorway and dog owners that don't clean up after their mutts (but not on the motorway)

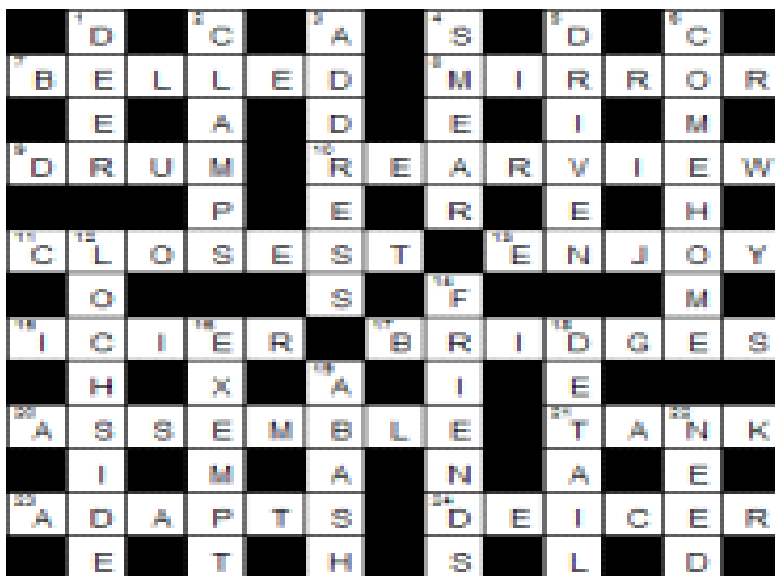
What 3 items (not including your family) would you rescue from your house if it was burning down?

Memories, There a big box of photos and videos of the weans from years ago everything else is just stuff. The photos are next to the insurance documents so I'll probably lift them. That gives me a problem because as the garage is attached to the house I will probably be wheeling the bike out while my wife is skelping me on the back of the head to go back in the house for the dogs. As I've already got the insurance documents the dogs would come next.

Who from history would you like to meet and why?

I think I would quite like to meet the Ayrshire blacksmith Kilpatrick McMillan the man who developed the pedal driven bike. Just to say to him "are you sure you don't want to get a patent for that thing"

The solution to last edition's crossword was:



Gavin Paton sent in this article about his beloved Diversion.

Praise to the big Divvy the Best bike in the club

After three years of running my present bike the Yamaha XJ 900s Diversion I feel it is about time I gave it some well deserved praise.

There are thousands of motorcycles out there that can boast impressive credentials when it comes to being practical and many of them are certainly very worthy. It's my contention that the most practical motorcycle ever made may well be the Yamaha XJ900s. So, what have I based my assertion on.

Real world riding

Depending on your expectations, the XJ is still excellent at doing what the designers intended, which was to provide all-round capability that focussed on long-distance travel. The S has a capacity of 892cc and boasts a claimed 90hp from its DOHC, air-cooled, four-cylinder engine, and perhaps more importantly some 60 lb ft of torque at 7000rpm to provide effortless overtaking and all day cruising speed over 80mph. It has an upright touring stance coupled with a good foot peg position and wide, supportive seat – perfect for travelling big distances with or without a passenger, effective integrated fairings. Economy is excellent for a big bike and I average about 48mpg with a best of 56mpg.

Reliability

Reliability has to be high on the list and both the Diversion and the earlier XJ 900F are amazingly robust, The only mechanical issues I have had in three years has been a broken gear lever return spring fixed for £5.80 for the spring and a small tube of instant gasket. The oil cooler cracked when I tried to remove it to check the valve clearances and was replaced with a generic car tuners type for a cost of about £45.00

Servicing

The Diversion is easy to home service. There's no complicated bodywork, no liquid cooling, and no techno trickery to get in the way of servicing. As a result, service costs are very reasonable. You can do the job yourself for about £24.00 for an oil and filter change, or part with about £70 for everything needed for a major service.

Simplicity

Simplicity is good and the engineering on the Diversion, with its roots firmly based in the air-cooled '80s, is quaintly uncomplicated, No fancy electronics here The front forks are adjustable for preload only, while the rear mono shock has a rising rate linkage and also features adjustable preload. Simple but effective 2 piston brake callipers and Shaft drive.

Simples says it all.

Value for money

I paid £900 for the bike 3 years ago and I could probably sell it on for the same price today. It has done everything asked of it over the past 12,000 miles and now has 62,000 miles on the clock. This years insurance quote was £70.48 fully comp or £55.82 tpft. Winter strip down and rebuild this year came to about £30.00. The only item that raised an eyebrow was the £76.00 for road tax but that's only because it costs me £20.00 to tax the car.

In conclusion

The Yamaha XJ900S Diversion is an excellent all-rounder at an affordable price: it's no luxury mega-tourer but it's supremely practical and great value. Cheap to run and insure, simple to service on your own plus spares are easy to source and not too pricey. Often

overlooked and underrated but has to be the best buy ever.

The self proclaimed and as yet undisputed best bike in the club is a 14 year old Yamaha XJ 900s Diversion and I have made myself a badge to prove it. I am willing to listen to counter-arguments and will give the best bike badge to the editor to pass on to the club member who comes up with the best argument that topples my bike from the top spot.

GAVIN PATON

So, the gauntlet has been thrown down. Can you send in an article to topple the Divvy from the top spot? Is your bike better?

For those intrepid adventurers who are maybe venturing into Europe for the first time, John Hill has sent in this useful list of items to take:-

Documents

Passport plus a photocopy

Ferry tickets

Personal Insurance

NHS health card (replaced E111 form)

Foreign money; credit/debit cards

Driving licence plus a photocopy and copy of paper section *

Insurance Certificate

V5 Registration/log book*

European Breakdown cover documents

Note : Have read that originals of these items * should be carried, but I have always just taken photocopies (but then I have never been requested to produce them!)

Bike

Copy of useful sections of bike handbook

Headlamp converter**

Disc lock

Puncture repair kit

Spare bulbs

Spare keys for bike and disc lock

Tank bag

Breathalyser (2 No.) if going to France

High visibility jacket/bib top

Note : **I have actually never bothered to use as I don't usually ride at night, but have been flashed in a long tunnel.

HELMETS

Many thanks to those who responded to the request for opinions on helmets. Here are your replies:-

Jonathan Douglas says:-

“My first helmet was a Nolan, big and heavy and to be honest worked its way loose after a year or two. **Point 1:** important factor in terms of choosing a helmet for me is fit. Not too snug or too comfy to move around over the months of ownership. I then progressed to Arai, on the basis that the cost is insignificant compared to the content. So buy the best you can afford. **Point 2:** helmets are expensive, but you get what you pay for. I have had a few down the road moments, one more significant than the others and in those moments my Arai has performed its role well and saved my head from the worst of the road. **Point 3:** pick a safe helmet that is proven. I always buy Arai as I know they work. **Point 4:** they have a shelf life, aside from the wrong kind of use. Five years max. Now this could be a sales gimmick or fact, but given the reason for wearing a helmet, aside from the wind and the rain, the elements, I have chosen to accept the five year lifespan as the truth and replace the helmet at that point, assuming point 3 does not happen before. **Point 5:** tinted visors. Personal taste here, but in Scotland, I cannot see the point in them or the road and for the riding style I often adopt, returning in an evening or dusk, I believe they are dangerous and should be avoided. I have seen helmets with drop down tinted screens, which look a good idea, but I am not aware of Arai producing such an option. **Point 6:** open face helmets. I like the idea, but are they as safe as full face, not in my opinion, so to date I have not bought one. I think that is all I have to say. In short, I buy Arai, pay the price, look for a good fit and try not to crash too often as its not good for the body or wallet.”

Ken Russell said:-

“Apropos helmets - my first and only helmet to date (now well overdue replacement) has been the original Caberg flip-up. It fits my head shape really well and has been totally comfortable from the outset. I can't compare wind noise with other makes but it's not intrusive so I'd guess it's possibly better than average. The internal sun visor works well and was a bonus (plus it looks cool!!!). The collar padding works very well at stopping cold air. I'd certainly buy another and at the moment I'm looking at something I can Bluetooth to work with my phone/SatNav/iPod. I bought a white helmet for visibility to other road users and would probably do the same again. Caberg are still very reasonably priced, street price is around £160 I think, and the new "Duke" model should be my old helmet improved by 2 generations - it comes designed to take their own Bluetooth but you can fit an aftermarket clipon and there is an option to have the helmet in DayGlo YELLOW!”

John Moss replied:-

“1st one, can't remember make, £30 from DK Motorcycles in Staffordshire, bought before I took my CBT. Full face, nothing fancy, worked OK.

2nd one Caberg J1 Plus, excellent helmet for a smoker (which I was at the time!). £90 from Two Wheels (10% discount), First flip front helmet I'd had. Comfortable, but noisy.

3rd one Arai, can't remember the model, but it wasn't an expensive one, £199 Hein Gericke. Super comfy, but still a bit noisy.

4th one HJC R-Pha Max flip front. Comfy flip front, bit noisy, and it gave, even me, helmet

hair! Good build quality, came with Pinlock. Chipped the shell when I came off the bike last year after having the helmet less than a month, so replaced with.....

Latest one Shoei Neotec. Best helmet (most expensive too!) I've had. Build quality is superb, comfy and quiet, even though it's a flip front. Came with Pinlock.

Steve Middleton wrote:-

SHOEI MULTITEC

"I bought this flip-front in anthracite after a satisfactory experience with a HJC SY-MAX. That had shown the benefit to me as a spectacles wearer of the flip, in not having to remove the glasses to get the helmet on and not having to struggle to get the side frames back into the helmet. However it had done several years' service commuting and the Shoei promised a better fit and ventilation. I'd had a full-face Shoei before and found it fitted my head shape and was well made. It has given great service since, been furnished with some reflective panels and a couple of new visors. It came with Pinlock and that is essential for the Scottish climate in my opinion. The Multitec is (or was at the time) unique in having the visor hinge and flip hinge in different places, so they work independently. Others with coaxial hinges would shut the visor onto the front when the latter was raised, and leave it closed when the front was lowered. The Shoei quick-change visor system was the best at the time too – others have since caught up. It has remained a good close fit, and works as it did on day 1. The only downside is that like most flip-fronts it is a bit noisy from the wind, but I wear plugs anyway so it makes no real difference. The double-D ring strap was a bit of a pain until I got the feel of it, after a seat-belt style clip, but now I can work it with gloves on if I really have to.

HJC CS12 BRAVEHEART

I have not worn it much, for the reasons I like the Multitec, but on a long run in good weather it makes a nice change. It is slightly heavier, but feels more "at one" with my head somehow.

HJC CL22

This is an open-face helmet in silver. It's light, has a big off-road style peak and a deep visor that covers the face fully, plus a quick-release seatbelt type strap. I use it when going short distances down town since it is so easy to put on and leaves my face fully visible for going into shops. I always notice how much bigger a field of view I have compared to the Multitec, and this will influence my choice of next main helmet, now they are being made with wider and deeper visor apertures."

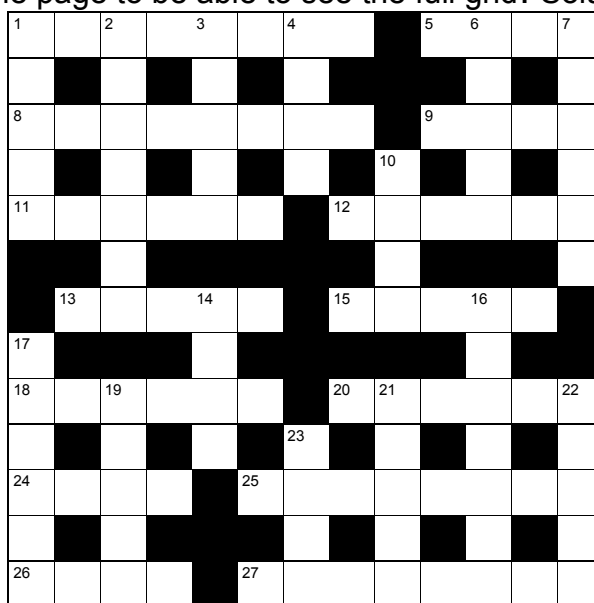
Steve Middleton also sent in this link to a very useful guide to the 112 emergency number and its use on a mobile, for both voice and text messages. It explains how the number takes priority and uses other networks if necessary. There's some useful info on positioning yourself too.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPZv_8dABfU&feature=player_embedded

Events Calendar

The Events Calendar is looking thin on the ground compared to this time last year, so please get in touch with John Moss at events@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk with any suggestions for Runs or other events you may be willing to run or help organise. He's going to start picking on people soon, so get your thinking caps on!!

New puzzle. Print out the page to be able to see the full grid. Solution next time.



ACROSS

- 1 The bikers' uniform! (8)
 5 Stuck or quick (4)
 8 Highway (4,4)
 9 Precipitation (4)
 11 Followed (6)
 12 It spans a river or railway (6)
 13 Quiet minor road (5)
 15 Become sore by rubbing (5)
 18 Old spelling of a region in western Scotland (6)
 20 Bend in the road (6)
 24 Miniature racing car (4)
 25 Spring flower (8)
 26 Jetty (4)
 27 "Unable to speak about it" in Scottish dialect (8)

DOWN

- 1 Boundary (5)
 2 Skill (7)
 3 One of the equine species (5)
 4 Behind (4)
 6 Prize (5)
 7 Two-seater vehicle (6)
 10 Curved structure (4)
 14 Fit (4)
 16 Wheel guards (7)
 17 Reverse without turning (4-2)
 19 Furze (5)
 21 Sea (5)
 22 Race or meeting (5)
 23 A bone of the arm (4)

Contact the Scottish Motorcycle Club via the Membership Secretary: Steve MacKinnon
 Tel: 01786 475948 07802 200964 E-mail: secretary@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk

This issue edited and published by: Janet Moss, 38 Lovells Glen, Linlithgow, EH49 7TD
 email: bikebytes@scottishmotorcycleclub.org.uk Tel: 01506 671396